

The Book Club of California

Quarterly

NEWS-LETTER



VOLUME XXXIII

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NUMBER TWO

ADRIAN WILSON

The Book Designer in Tuscany Alley

By Jane Wilson

ROBINSON JEFFERS: A POET'S POET

By James D. Hart

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Elected to Membership

Published for its members by
The Book Club of California, 545 Sutter St.
San Francisco

The Book Club of California

FOUNDED in 1912, The Book Club of California is a non-profit association of book-lovers and collectors who have a special interest in Pacific Coast history, literature, and fine printing. Its chief aims are to further the interests of book collectors and to promote an understanding and appreciation of fine books.

The Club is limited to 875 members. When vacancies exist membership is open to all who are in sympathy with its aims and whose applications are approved by the Board of Directors. Regular membership involves no responsibilities beyond payment of the annual dues. Dues date from the month of the member's election. Regular membership is \$15.00; Sustaining, \$25.00; Patron, \$100.00.

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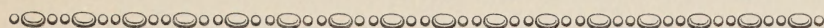
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ADRIAN WILSON

The Book Designer In Tuscany Alley

By JANE WILSON*

THOUGH THE *pièce de résistance* of Adrian Wilson's career as a printer to date is without doubt *Printing for Theater*, as one examines his total output it becomes obvious that his major contribution to the graphic arts field is as a book designer. Such books as *Greek Sculpture*, *Lectures on the Whole of Anatomy*, *The Oresteia* (for The Limited Editions Club), the much used *Spice Islands Cook Book* and *Sunset Cook Book*, and *FIAT LUX: The University of California* reflect his philosophy of book design as a creative art and demonstrate his ability to make each book a distinctive entity in itself. In his recently published book, *The Design of Books*, Wilson aptly defines his criterion of book design as "imaginative appropriateness, that sense of delightful surprise which draws a reader into a book and sends him out of the store or library with it under his arm, which gives the book club or mail-order subscriber a glow of satisfaction and an irresistible desire to read. With the book in hand he should find that the typography communicates, the illustrations illuminate, and the binding enhances and preserves the creator's thought."¹

While the highlights of Wilson's career have been described in various trade publications, many Book Club members do not have access to these journals; hence, it seems most appropriate, on the publication of his own book, to give a brief historical account in order

¹ Wilson, Adrian. *The Design of Books*. New York, Reinhold, and London, Studio Vista, 1967. \$15.00.

*Jane Wilson, a Director of the Book Club, is Acting Head of the Department of Special Collections, the General Library, University of California, Davis, for a year. The similarity in names is merely a coincidence.

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to set the stage for the checklist which follows. Although many people believe that one's career interest supposedly develops on the college campus, when Adrian Wilson was a student at Wesleyan University (1941-43) his major interests were English literature and playing the clarinet. It wasn't until 1945, when he was one of a group of artists and writers (which included such persons as William Everson, now Brother Antoninus, Martin Ponch and Kermit Sheets) at a Civilian Public Service Camp in Waldport, Oregon, that he first demonstrated his talents as a famous printer-to-be. Club member William R. Eshelman recalls, "One of my earliest printing memories is of Adrian Wilson, very big and very young, bending over the composing stone, and arranging the letters C-O-M-P-A-S-S in the appropriate semicircle, from which he intended to print a letterhead for the periodical of that name. It had been made clear to him why this couldn't be done in our primitive print shop, but he persisted in his defiance of the composing stick, poured plaster of Paris to hold the letters in place and when it was dry locked up his form. It worked."² During his stay at Waldport, Wilson's interest in the theater was also sparked when he became involved in a camp production of Ibsen's *Ghosts* in which his future wife played Mrs. Alving.

In 1946 Wilson, his actress wife, Joyce Lancaster, and some equally determined friends established the now famous San Francisco repertory theater, The Interplayers. As the time approached for their first production, Wilson agreed to print the required announcements and programs on a small platen press borrowed from a group of anarchists. So, with paper trimmings from the Grabhorn Press, he set to work producing the first of a long stream of those delightful pieces for the theater that are now collector's items. His first book, *Songs for Certain Children*, was also printed on this press in 1947, as was his second, *Ins/Outs*. It was while working on the former book that he first encountered Jack Stauffacher of the Greenwood Press, who lent him the stock-cuts used in the book. About this time, and following a brief period working for the Pacific Music Press, Wilson registered as a full-time student of the University of California's School of Architecture. At the instigation of his friend, William Everson, who was then working as a janitor at the University Press while printing on his own, Wilson used his free time on the

²Eshelman, William R. "Adrian Wilson: Book Designer, Printer & Publisher." *California Librarian*, xxii, no. 3, July 1961. Insert.

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campus to study and explore the holdings of the library of the Press as well as those of the Rare Book Room in the University Library—he himself refers to this experience as “a period of awakening.” However, after one semester, he was persuaded to give up his studies to join Jack Stauffacher at the Greenwood Press where together they produced three books, and began a fourth for the Book Club, *The Miner’s Own Book*, completed by Stauffacher.

In 1949, Wilson set up his press (a Challenge-Gordon which was soon traded for a Colt’s Armory) in the lobby of The Interplayers’ first theater at the corner of Beach and Hyde Streets. Here the audience could witness programs being printed before curtain time.³ During the next four years, fifteen books were produced in the theater lobby, including Wilson’s first individual Book Club commission, *The Coppa Murals*. In fact, it was the need for an oblong format to accommodate the photographs for the murals that resulted in his purchasing of a Kelly B Cylinder Press. Once installed, it was Lawton Kennedy who helped him “bring the monster to heel.” When, in 1953, The Interplayers moved to the old Verdier mansion on Vallejo Street, Wilson moved his press to 343 Front Street where he continued printing books, brochures, playbills, etc., as well as designing books for both the University of California Press (his first commission had come in 1950) and Stanford University Press. In 1956, at the behest of August Frugé, he went to work for the University of California Press on a full-time basis. However, this association lasted for only two years, after which he took a leave of absence, closed his shop and sailed for Europe for a year with his wife and daughter.

In the meantime, the year 1957 had seen the publication of his now famous story of The Interplayers’ programs, *Printing for Theater*, which won inclusion in the AIGA Fifty Books show of 1958 and was acclaimed “the biggest thing in the show for page size . . . imagination and sheer quality . . .”⁴ Therefore, his reputation was already established when, on his way to Europe, Wilson stopped by The George Macy Companies Office (The Limited Editions Club and The Heritage Club). It was this visit that led to his first commissions, *The Romance of Tristan and Iseult* and *Nostromo*, the designs for which

³Bennett, Paul A. “Adrian Wilson: Designer-Printer at Tuscany Alley.” *Publishers’ Weekly*, CLXXXV, no. 14, April 6, 1964. pp. 66-72.

⁴Glixon, David M. “The AIGA ‘50 Books Show of 1958’: The Best in Recent Years.” *Publishers’ Weekly*, CLXXXIII, no. 15, April 14, 1958. pp. 54-65.

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were begun in Paris. Once in Europe, Wilson spent the first six months studying the art of the book and visiting various famous designers, printers and graphic artists. The next six months, he worked at the Cambridge University Press, primarily assisting John Dreyfus, Advisor to the Press, in the production of *The New English Bible*, *Bruce Rogers and American Typography*, and *Type Specimen Facsimiles*. In addition, he practiced letter cutting in stone at the workshop of David Kindersley, author of the Book Club's recent publication on Eric Gill.

Returning to San Francisco in 1960, he set up a book design studio at Number One Tuscany Alley, and, once his announcements featuring the type-juggler were distributed, he has been busy with commissions ever since, as witnessed by the listing below. Eventually he withdrew his Kelly press from storage, reassembled it and took on the printing of some books, including the recent Horatio Alger for the Club. And, as more commissions continue to roll in, it will be a pleasure and a most rewarding experience to watch the further development of the man who is now one of America's leading book designers.

* * *

As we go to press news has reached us of a disastrous fire that destroyed Adrian and Joyce Wilson's house in Tuscany Alley, San Francisco. The top two floors, containing all their fine books and personal possessions, were completely gutted. The fire however did not destroy the basement, which held the press and printing equipment. But the loss is still irreparable, and we are sure all members of the Club will join with us when we express our deepest regrets to Mr. and Mrs. Wilson at this time.

The Editor

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An Adrian Wilson Checklist

The first twenty-four items in this checklist consist of books both printed and designed by Adrian Wilson. (No attempt has been made to include any so-called ephemeral items in this listing.) The final, and by far the largest, portion of the checklist consists solely of books designed by Wilson. The latter are arranged alphabetically by year of publication. Paperback reprints, legal and scientific series, annual reports and a few items the designer prefers to forget are omitted.

[1] Broughton, James. *SONGS FOR CERTAIN CHILDREN*. San Francisco, 1947. 9 leaves. 12x9. 100 copies.

This book was commissioned by the author to be distributed as a Christmas book. It was printed at the Ark Press, which consisted of an 8x11 Challenge Gordon Press, one case of type and one can of black ink, located in the tool shed at 1100 O'Farrell Street and owned by a group of literary anarchists. The metal stock cuts were borrowed from Jack Stauffacher of the Greenwood Press at the suggestion of the author, who introduced the two printers. Original pastel drawings by the children of the Presidio Hill Nursery School decorate the front and back of the paper

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covers. Unbound. Centaur and Arrighi types. Construction paper in various colors.

[2] Swetzoﬀ, Hyman. *INS/OUTS*. James Schevill, editor. San Francisco, Berkeley Editions, Bern Porter, publisher, 1947. 39 pages. $8\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{7}{8}$. 125 copies.

Printed at the Ark Press for the author. The commission for this book resulted from a chance meeting between the printer and author in Gump's where the latter was the Director of the art gallery. Purple line drawing on the cover by Stanley William Hayter. Centaur and Arrighi types. Corsican gray paper.

[3] Gill, Eric. *AND WHO WANTS PEACE?* San Francisco, Jack Werner Stauffacher and Adrian Wilson at the Greenwood Press, 1948. 8 pages. $16\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$. 100 copies.

This address was given at Kingsway Hall, London, 11 November 1936. Block cuts by Mary Fabilli. Eric Gill's Perpetua type. Tovil handmade paper.

[4] Isbell, F. A. *MINING AND HUNTING IN THE FAR WEST 1852-1870*. With an introduction by Nathan Van Patten. Burlingame, William P. Wreden, 1948. 36 pages. $9\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$. 200 copies.

Printed at the Greenwood Press by Jack Werner Stauffacher and Adrian Wilson. Decorative paper-covered green boards with red and black stock cuts of animals. This is the first book to win inclusion in the AIGA Fifty Books of the Year in which Adrian Wilson was involved in the designing and printing. Caslon Old Style type. Hamilton Text paper.

[5] Spiegelberg, Frederic. *THE RELIGION OF NO-RELIGION*. Stanford, California, James Ladd Delkin, 1948. 130 pages. $9\frac{1}{4} \times 6$. 600 copies.

This book was designed and printed at the Greenwood Press by Jack Werner Stauffacher and Adrian Wilson. Drawings and diagrams were by Oliver Andrews while the Alchemy blocks were by Jack W. Stauffacher. Janson type. Warren's Olde Style paper.

[6] Coffield, Glen. *THE NIGHT IS WHERE YOU FLY*. San Francisco, Printed by Adrian Wilson for The Centaur Press, 1949. 34 pages. $8\frac{3}{8} \times 5\frac{3}{8}$. 100 copies.

Linoleum block illustrations by Lee Mullican. This book was printed at the Greenwood Press with Centaur and Arrighi types. 80 copies were

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printed on Halmstad handmade paper while 20 were on Highclere handmade paper.

[7] Anthony, George. *THE SCHOLAR DUNCE*. With an original etching by Hyman Bloom. Boston, The Swetsoff Gallery, 1951. 41 pages. $12\frac{3}{8} \times 9\frac{7}{8}$. 115 copies.

Printed at the Sign of the Interplayers, San Francisco. Various handmade papers were used but all copies of the etching were printed on handmade Rives of which 15 were printed directly from the copper plate. Janson and Libra types.

[8] Gerstle, Sara. *FOUR GHOST STORIES*. San Francisco, Adrian Wilson Printer at the Sign of the Interplayers, 1951. 29 pages. $9\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$. 150 copies.

Silk screen cover design by Miriam Wornum. The book was enthusiastically reviewed by Joseph Henry Jackson in his column "Between the Lines." Centaur and Arrighi types. Shadowmould paper.

[9] Jeffers, Robinson. *MEDITATION ON SAVIORS*. San Francisco, 1951. 8 pages. $10\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{8}$. 5 copies.

This limited edition consists of five copies: One for the author, Robinson Jeffers; one for the typographer, Theodore Ligda; one for the designer and printer, Adrian Wilson; one for the Library of Hermes Publications, Inc.; one for Kenneth Burke. Centaur and Granjon types. Tuscan handmade paper.

[10] Wilson, Adrian P. *THE STADIUM*. Middletown, Connecticut, 1951. 14 pages. $10 \times 6\frac{1}{2}$. 125 copies.

Printed at the Sign of the Interplayers, San Francisco. Original manuscript typed by Christine van der Goot Wilson. A short story written by the printer's father. Centaur and Caslon types. LLF French mouldmade paper. The paper for this book, and for *The Night Is Where You Fly* and *The Scholar Dunce* was purchased from the Merrymount Press, Boston, upon its closing.

[11] Bushnell, Mabel Cone. *POEMS*. San Francisco, Adrian Wilson at the Sign of the Interplayers, 1952. 2 volumes. $9\frac{1}{8} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$. 200 copies.

Arrangements for the publication of these poems were made by S. M. Ashman for the estate of Mabel Cone Bushnell. Handmade French marble papers are on slip cases and covers. Janson and Arrighi types.

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[12] Gerstle, Sara. *THREE HOUSES*. San Francisco, Adrian Wilson, Printer at the Sign of the Interplayers, 1952. 28 pages. $9\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$. 150 copies.

This book is a sequel to *Four Ghost Stories* and was illustrated by Edwin Chapman. Centaur and Arrighi types. Shadowmould paper.

[13] Rosenthal, Erwin. *PICASSO: PAINTER AND ENGRAVER*. San Francisco, 1952. 33 pages. 9×6 . 75 copies.

"Picasso: Painter and Engraver" was the subject of a lecture delivered at the University of California, Berkeley. The book, commissioned by the author, was dedicated to Igor Stravinsky on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. Centaur and Caslon types. Umbria handmade paper.

[14] *THE STUDENT YEAR 51-52*. Berkeley, Architecture Association of the University of California, 1952. 32 pages. $6\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$. 400 copies.

Printed at the Sign of the Interplayers. Bodoni monotype. Arches paper.

[15] Unna, Warren. *THE COPPA MURALS: A PAGEANT OF BOHEMIAN LIFE IN SAN FRANCISCO AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY*. Introduction by Joseph Henry Jackson. San Francisco, The Book Club of California, 1952. 61 pages. $8\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{3}{4}$. 350 copies.

Printed at the Sign of the Interplayers. This was the printer's first independent commission for the Club. Centaur and Arrighi types. Part of the edition was printed on B-R (Bruce Rogers) paper while the remainder was on Oxbow.

[16] *THE ARK 1953. A SUMMARY OF THE STUDENT YEAR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE*. Berkeley, The Architecture Association of the University of California, 1953. 53 pages. $6\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{3}{4}$. About 500 copies.

Spiral binding. Printed at 343 Front Street. Libra and Fairfield types. Strathmore Pastelle paper.

[17] Meany, Andrée. *LA CALIFORNIE: UNE MERVEILLEUSE AVENTURE*. San Francisco, 1953. 62 pages. $9\frac{1}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{8}$. 250 copies.

Title page block by Nuiko Haramaki. "Achévé d'imprimer le 31 décembre 1952 sur les presses d'Adrian Wilson. Typographie de Mackenzie & Harris, Inc. qui a utilisé pour la première fois aux Etats-Unis le caractère Van Dijck. Cet ouvrage a été réalisé sous la direction technique d'Henri Pardeilhan."

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[18] Kees, Weldon. POEMS 1947-1954. San Francisco, Adrian Wilson, 1954. 81 pages. 10x6 $\frac{3}{4}$. 500 copies.

This book was the first to be issued under the new imprint: Adrian Wilson/San Francisco, which was located at 343 Front Street. Caslon type. Strathmore Pastelle paper.

[19] Lottinville, Savoie. WESTERN MAN AND HIS TRADITION. Berkeley, Alumni Association of the School of Librarianship, University of California, 1955. 17 pages. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ x4 $\frac{1}{2}$. 300 copies.

The Second Edith M. Coulter Lecture presented November 13, 1953, before the California Library Association at Stockton, California. Centaur, Arrighi and Estienne types. Linweave Early American paper.

[20] Dillon, Richard H. BULLY WATERMAN & THE VOYAGE OF THE CLIPPER CHALLENGE, NEW YORK TO SAN FRANCISCO, 1851. San Francisco, The Roxburghe Club, 1956. 22 pages. 7 $\frac{5}{8}$ x8 $\frac{7}{8}$. 125 copies.

The wood engravings are from *The Kedge-Anchor; or Young Sailors' Assistant* by William Brady, Sailing Master, U.S.N., New York, 1855. Printed for the Albert Bender Memorial Fund. Garamond and Granjon types. Early American paper.

[21] Wilson, Adrian. PRINTING FOR THEATER. San Francisco, 1957. 57 pages. 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ x10 $\frac{5}{8}$. 250 copies.

Chapter headings and binding blocks by Nuiko Haramaki. Many original Interplayers programs are tipped in and additional programs are in pocket. End papers are also original programs for "Hamlet." AIGA Fifty Books of the Year. This is the first book printed by Adrian Wilson to bear his well-known printer's device. This too was designed by Nuiko Haramaki. Trajanus and Caslon types. Tovil handmade paper.

[22] MY FIRST PUBLICATION: ELEVEN CALIFORNIA AUTHORS DESCRIBE THEIR EARLIEST APPEARANCES IN PRINT. Edited with Introductions by James D. Hart. San Francisco, The Book Club of California, 1961. 106 pages. 10x6 $\frac{3}{4}$. 475 copies.

Printed by Adrian Wilson at his Press in Tuscany Alley, San Francisco, October 1961. Drawings by David Stone Martin. Monotype Bulmer and Deberney & Peignot's Cristal types. Strathmore Pastelle paper.

[23] Stevenson, Robert Louis. SAN FRANCISCO: A MODERN COSMOPOLIS. Preface by James D. Hart. San Francisco, The Book Club of California, 1963. 51 pages. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ x10 $\frac{1}{2}$. 450 copies.

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The book, begun as a project for Adrian Wilson's class in typography at the San Francisco Art Institute, is enhanced by a four-page "Printer's Note On How This Book Came Into Being." Drawings by Irene Pattinson. Photographs from the collection of Wyland Stanley. Centaur and Arrighi types. Strathmore Pastelle paper.

[24] Alger, Horatio, Jr. *THE YOUNG MINER; OR, TOM NELSON IN CALIFORNIA*. San Francisco, The Book Club of California, 1965. 187 pages. 10x7. 450 copies.

Printed by Adrian Wilson at his Press in Tuscany Alley, San Francisco. Bulmer and Tuscan Ombree types. Most of the woodcuts and engravings which illustrate this book are from the printer's archives. Many of them originally appeared in the French magazine *Le Tour du Monde* and were executed by French engravers who, since they had never been to California, copied them from photographs, daguerrotypes, sketches by French travelers, and engravings in American publications. However, the frontispiece of *Our Hero* is from the first edition of 1879.

To be continued next issue

ROBINSON JEFFERS: *A Poet's Poet*

By JAMES D. HART

NOT LONG AFTER the beginning of his literary career Robinson Jeffers was hailed in a little book by George Sterling, the California poet who was his senior in years though not in accomplishment. Now, with the career closed and the last lines printed, Jeffers is once again the subject of a little book by another California poet.* The poet, this time his junior, is Brother Antoninus, named William Everson before his conversion, and he is an incomparably greater writer than the earlier adulator. His is a far tougher, more thoughtful, and yet also more emotionally evocative work than Sterling's.

Not altogether unexpectedly there are a few similarities in the two critiques. Both have to dispose of Whitman before they can confront

**Robinson Jeffers: Fragments of an Older Fury*, published by Oyez, Box 3014, Berkeley, 1968. \$7.50.

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Jeffers himself. Sterling declared that "the long sweep and surge of his lines, the reach of his imagination" cause Jeffers to be compared with the author of *Leaves of Grass* but he finds Jeffers to be "more lithe and rhythmic in his lines than the elder poet," and considers that "he immensely exceeds the grey singer in scope and significance of vision." Brother Antoninus, more scrupulous in analysis, writes that "though intuitively requiring the same psychic equivalent as the relatively unschooled Whitman, [Jeffers] found the solutions of the Good Gray Poet too disingenuously obvious, too transparently *available* for his classical formation, his reserved aristocratic instinct, to accept utterly."

Brother Antoninus considers, comes to terms with, and lauds Jeffers in a variety of ways. Initially, and quite frankly, he declares himself to be, so far as he knows, "the only disciple Jeffers ever had," although something in the nature of the two men—one desiring no disciples, the other incapable of unbridled adulation like Sterling's—kept them from meeting, even though the younger poet lived within a hundred miles of the elder all his life save for the war years. In defense of Jeffers Brother Antoninus vigorously lashes against what he calls "that handful of certified authors who are the touchstones of contemporary cultural attitudes," putting Pound and Eliot in what he considers their places and raising Jeffers to what he is convinced should be his. Despising what he calls "the razzle-dazzle New Critics" of the 1940's quite as much as "the fashionable existential critics of the 50's," Brother Antoninus demonstrates that Jeffers is neither so "hopelessly simplistic and archaic" as the latter thought nor so lacking in nicety of statement as to yield little to the scrutiny of close textual analysis practiced by the former. Although he concedes that "Jeffers is a poet of direct statements," for Brother Antoninus "he is also a master rhetorician, and it is precisely by the authority of his rhetoric that he lifts his statements, merely provisional statements, into consequentiality." The disciple discovers that in his senior "once more the poet is deep in his 'heroic tribal role as purifier of the language,' taking speech down to its pre-rational deeps and rubbing it clean upon psychic formations as grave and enduring as the stone beneath the coastal headland, and the elemental sea."

While in one essay Brother Antoninus defends Jeffers by explicating his text with great literary precision, in another he studies the

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political views that caused Jeffers to be called a follower of fascism in the 1930's and 40's, an accusation from which he has recovered less well than have Yeats and Lawrence, Pound and Eliot, who also suffered the same stigma. In the longest essay of all Brother Antoninus attacks those who deprecate *The Women at Point Sur* as he attempts to put it in what he considers to be its proper perspective so as to show it as "Jeffers' central masterpiece and to reverse the prevalent feeling that it, of all his poems, is least successful." Less extensive but comparably significant is the reprinting, with some additions, of the review of *The Beginning and the End*, to prove that this last work was a "satisfying coda," in that it shows Jeffers to have been possessed to the end of an "appalling clarity" is seeing mankind as having "turned its back upon the vision of God . . . God not as Jehovah but as Nature," and in consequence, "obsessed with itself, . . . and in this obsession . . . consuming itself as it dies."

As he ranges over Jeffers' poems Brother Antoninus dwells now on fury and on horror, now on somber beauty and high dignity so as "to celebrate the memory of a noble man and a great artist." Finally this leads to the seventh and last part of the book, the reprinting, from a very limited edition, of the memorial, "The Poet is Dead," a unique work by Brother Antoninus, for out of deference to the unshakable integrity of Jeffers he was compelled "to write my only poem *not* composed on a specifically Christian theme since my conversion twelve years before." In this book we have not only an important text on a great California poet who far transcends the regional setting he chose but a major statement too of the beliefs and critical powers of another significant poet who also lives in this area but whose writings are also possessed of universality.

Recent Library Acquisitions

By ALBERT SPERISEN

THROUGH THE GENEROSITY of Director Warren Howell, the Club now owns a copy of one of the finest examples of book making that the Grabhorn-Hoyem Press has done to date. This handsome book is a new translation of *The Pearl*, by John C. Crawford and Andrew Hoyem.

The Pearl is a medieval poem considered by many to be the finest

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visionary poem in our language. This new translation is taken from the unique 14th-century manuscript in the British Museum. Four of the original illustrations used are reproduced here in full color for the first time. The original Middle English text is printed in red in a type face which closely approximates the original handwriting, and is imposed interlinearly with the translation, printed in black. This interesting device, intended for easy reference, creates a typographical page of uncommon beauty.

The book is printed on an English mould-made paper, and is strikingly cased in blue pongee silk with a white goatskin back stamped in gold. The translators have added a scholarly commentary on the poetics and historical setting of the poem as well as a guide for the reading of Middle English aloud. They have also included a bibliography of the various translations of this poem since its first publication in 1864.

We are grateful to Mr. Howell for this fine addition to our collection of outstanding Western printing.

Elected to Membership

The following have been elected since the publication of the Winter *News-Letter*:

<i>Member</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>
John D. Brooks	Alameda	(former member)
Donald E. Knox	San Marino	Charles P. Yale
George H. M. Lawrence	Pittsburgh, Penna.	Jack W. Stauffacher
Jack Pollexfen	Sausalito	Membership Committee
Shirley Sargent	Yosemite	Francis P. Farquhar
George H. Tweney	Seattle, Wash.	Julius Barclay

New Sustaining Members

The two classifications of membership above Regular Membership are Patron Memberships, \$100 a year, and Sustaining Memberships, \$25 a year. The following have changed from Regular to Sustaining Membership:

Richard S. Dinner	San Francisco
John D. Foley	Berkeley
Saul Marks	Los Angeles
Amy Thompson	San Francisco

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Annual Meeting

THE ANNUAL MEETING of The Book Club of California will be held at the Club rooms, 545 Sutter Street, San Francisco, on Tuesday, March 19, at 11:30 a.m.

DOROTHY WHITNAH, *Secretary*

Notes on Publications

THE FALL BOOK for 1967, David Kindersley's *Mr Eric Gill*, sold out immediately, and we were unable to fill any orders for second copies. A few copies remain available of the Christmas book, Kenneth M. Johnson's *The Sting of "The Wasp,"* printed by Saul and Lillian Marks at their Plantin Press. Members may wish to purchase copies of this volume as gifts.

The Spring book, Gelett Burgess' *Behind the Scenes*, edited by Joseph Backus (which was originally announced for publication in the Fall of 1967), will be issued late in March. Members will be receiving the prospectus for this handsome book about the same time this issue of the *Quarterly* is mailed out. Because the edition is limited to 400 copies, it is important for members without standing orders to return the remittance envelope immediately if they wish to make sure of a copy.

The Publications Committee is always looking for suitable manuscripts for a Book Club publication. Because the Club is located in San Francisco, emphasis has been largely on Northern California subjects; but the Committee would welcome Southern California material, too. If any of the Southern California members have suitable manuscripts, will they please forward them to the Book Club for the Committee's consideration.

Keepsakes

THE KEEPSAKES FOR 1967 have been particularly well received. The Editor wishes to take this opportunity to acknowledge with thanks the help in this project given by James D. Hart. It is interesting to note that there was a laudatory mention of the series in a recent number of *Publishers' Weekly*.

Work is now in progress on the 1968 series, which will be described in the Summer issue of the *Quarterly News-Letter*.

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Book Reviews

There is a picture of antiquarian booksellers, fostered by third-rate Victorian novelists, like Miss Braddon and Rhoda Broughton, which has persisted to this day. It shows a loveable old curmudgeon in a skull-cap and carpet slippers shuffling about an ill-lit basement shop, muttering in his beard about lost Elzevirs. Apparently this is to connote eccentricity, absent-mindedness, other-worldliness—in brief an old buffer who is only just short of being committed. Why the purveyor of rare books was—and sometimes still is—drawn thus is difficult to say, except that dealing in first editions, incunabula and other such desiderata is often thought by non-collectors to be a very odd pastime indeed and why anyone should choose it as a profession even odder.

Mention of this distorted picture of members of an ancient and honorable (and sometimes profitable) trade is occasioned by the recently published memoirs of Harold C. Holmes, dean of antiquarian booksellers in the Bay Area. * No book could better demonstrate how false a picture it is. Harold Holmes, who died last year at the age of 87 after 71 consecutive years in the pursuit of his profession, was a keen man of business, yet warm-hearted, gregarious and anything but an eccentric old buffer. His knowledge of books was vast and he could reminisce by the hour about Californiana, the dear dead days when he made "buys" in the Mother Lode country, and the collectors and librarians who gathered in his Oakland shop to discuss their favorite subject—books. He was not a "scholar" bookseller and never pretended to be, but he knew what was in the volumes he sold. In spirit he was a cracker-box philosopher and he usually had a wise saw to illustrate a point. He was always generous with his knowledge, ever ready to share it with some neophyte, whether he be collector or rival bookseller.

From the pages of this book emerges a man who will be instantly recognized by his many friends. He wrote, as he talked, with simplicity and clarity, and while these "reminiscences" are certainly "random," they are seldom dull. The book is formless in the sense that it is not a cradle-to-the-grave autobiography. He jumps from subject to subject, just as if he were talking to you, and one tale reminded him of another—and perhaps better—one. Therein lies much of the book's charm.

Readers of the *Quarterly* may remember that a few years ago a chapter

*HAROLD C. HOLMES, *Some Random Reminiscences*. The Holmes Book Company, Oakland. \$7.50.

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or two of *Random Reminiscences* were published in these pages. They will be pleased to find the whole between hard covers. The publishers are to be congratulated on preserving this memoir of a man who knew Hubert Howe Bancroft, who lost his entire stock in the Fire and Earthquake, starting again from scratch, and who was selling books before many of us were born.

D. M.

Vincent Figgins Type Specimens, 1801 and 1815, a facsimile edition produced by the Printing Historical Society, London, 1967. 4 guineas.

This is a finely reproduced facsimile of an extremely rare type specimen book. According to the introduction, there are only seven copies known—three of which are in America. The introduction and notes are informative and knowingly written by Berthold Wolpe, the type designer and lettering man. Although this is a specialist's book, outsiders (so to speak) will be impressed by the wealth of information and the engaging manner in which Mr. Wolpe sets forth his facts. Wolpe notes, for example, that the strident demands for advertising during the late 18th and early 19th century forced the type founders to produce bastard elongated types and bolder letters which eventually resulted in the absurd overweight typefaces which became too common. However, Thomas Bensley made fine use of much of the better type faces designed by Figgins and he credited Figgins on his title pages.

Following the introduction, Wolpe has reprinted a "Description of the Type Foundry," taken from the *Cabinet Cyclopaedia*, London, 1834. And to this he has added a table of comparative type sizes, giving the traditional names of types—e.g., Great Primer, French Canon—with their approximate equivalent in modern point sizes.

With our own Adrian Wilson's book just off the press (it will be reviewed in our next issue), Wolpe prints a quotation as a pre-introduction that Adrian should have used—if he hasn't! This quotation makes invidious the perennial designers' cry for a *new* typeface. It reads:

The good old legible types formerly used in print are being scorned in these days (on account of new ones being cut every day). And yet, however many new faces may be cut, when they have been forgotten and no more new ones can be imagined, the old ones will once more be produced under the pretence that they are new, as is the case with other things.

This was written by Wolfgang Guggenberger in the introduction to his *Handwriting Manual* in 1553!

A. S.

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Gallimaufry

IN THE SUMMER 1967 issue of the *Quarterly News-Letter* Dr. Donovan J. McCune described the multifarious activities of Henry Morris—printer, paper maker, bookbinder, writer, publisher. Now Morris announces the publication of a new work from his Bird & Bull Press: *Omnibus*, containing instructions for amateur papermakers with notes and observations on private presses, book printing and some people who are involved in these activities. *Omnibus* is printed on a variety of hand made papers—there is paper from the Dard Hunter mill at Lime Rock, Connecticut; from Australia; and from the Bird & Bull Press. There is also a sample sheet from the last wind-driven paper mill in Holland. The text is set in Emerson types and printed on dampened hand made paper from J. Barcham Green's Hayle Mill. The book is hand sewn on tapes, has hand sewn head and tail bands, and is quarter bound with Niger back by Sangorski & Sutcliffe. It has been printed in an edition of 500 copies, with page size 6½x9½ inches. (121 pp.; \$35.00; available from Henry Morris, 231 Elm Avenue, North Hills, Pennsylvania 19038, and from Dawson's Book Shop, 550 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, California 90017.)

SINCE COMPLETION last September of their large and sumptuous edition of *Dialogues of Creatures Moralised*, The Allen Press has been working on an unusually rare combination of text and illustrations. In fact, it will be a first edition of some twenty-seven drawings by Albrecht Dürer. In 1492, Johann Amerbach of Basel commissioned the young Dürer and his assistants to design nearly 150 woodcuts to illustrate a Latin edition of the Roman comedies by Terence. When the pen and ink drawings on white-grounded blocks were completed in 1493, Johann Trechsel of Lyons brought out an excellent illustrated edition of Terence, causing Amerbach to abandon his project; and the Dürer drawings were never used, except some in journals and books concerned directly with the artist himself. The blocks finally came to rest at the Basel Art Museum, which gave the Allens permission to use twenty-seven of them illustrating *The Brothers*, the masterpiece of Terence (195-159 B.C.), who is one of the greatest playwrights of all time. The Allens have handset the uncial types designed by Menhart of Prague, and this will be their first book use in this country. The paper was handmade in England especially for The Allen Press, and bears their watermark. The books have been printed in several colors on a Columbian Handpress, with a page size of 13 by 9½ inches. Because the

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books were produced entirely by hand, the edition is limited to 140 copies. The price is \$65.00 per copy. The work will be completed in March, and a prospectus will be issued at that time. (Interested collectors who are not on their mailing list may write to The Allen Press, 10 Ridgcrest Road, Kentfield, California 94904.)

ALTHOUGH SHAKESPEARE'S *The Taming of the Shrew* is purported to be a comedy, printers have been inclined to treat it rather ponderously, typographically speaking. The editions we have seen are essentially lugubrious, in spite of some efforts at humor by the illustrators. (We hope that such treatment does not reflect the marital condition of the printers.) Therefore we were delighted with the recent edition published by Lewis Osborne and printed by Grabhorn-Hoyem. Typographically, this book is refreshingly light and cheerful; a sensitive vehicle for such a spirited comedy. The effect is enhanced by the delicate and colorful drawings by Valenti Angelo who, many years ago, decorated so many of the best Grabhorn editions. Also making this book a worthwhile addition to anybody's library is the colorful binding, the excellent English mould made paper, the deft and whimsical typographical touch of Sherwood Grover, and the impeccable type-setting by his wife, Katharine Grover. The edition, with a page size 14 by 9 inches, is limited to 375 copies. The price is \$35.00. (Available at bookstores or from Lewis Osborne, Publisher, 916 Palo Alto Office Center, Palo Alto, California 94301.)

EACH YEAR the Private Library Association of England issues a comprehensive booklet including details on most of the books issued by private presses throughout the world. *Private Press Books 1966* lists over 200 titles, including such California presses as: The Allen Press, Hart Press, Magpie Press, Nova Press, Tamalpais Press and Tenfingers Press. The compilation of this data is an important contribution to the bibliography on fine printing, and is, of course, a gargantuan task. The editors recently issued a call to all private press operators to send details of their 1967 editions: Roderick Cave, Private Libraries Association, 41 Cuckoo Hill Road, Pinner, Middlesex, England. *Private Press Books 1966* has 61 pages plus a bibliography, and sells for \$3.50.

Christmas Keepsakes

FOR NUMBER TWENTY in his series of Christmas Keepsakes, A. R. Tommasini has produced another handsome booklet, *Printers' Marks, Curious and Challenging*, with some twenty-five marks reproduced and com-

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mented upon. Also received by the Club library is another Christmas booklet, *The Country Mouse and the Town Mouse*, issued by the Stinehour Press, Lunenburg, Vermont. The text, an old fable indicating that all animals are creatures of habit, is charmingly illustrated by Wendy Watson.

When harassed by the materialism of the holiday season, we contemplate with pleasure the arrival of the Christmas booklets produced by members Wm. P. Barlow, Jr. at his Nova Press, and James D. Hart at the Hart Press. Last December, the former issued *Songs for Water Skiers*, with witty lyrics and clever music by the intrepid printer and water-skier himself; and Ruth and James Hart printed by hand the quaint and whimsical *An English Parson's Christmas Celebrations, 1870*.

Another well-designed holiday pamphlet was issued by Club member Grant Dahlstrom of Pasadena: *Stanley Morison* by Beatrice Warde. This was a lecture delivered by Mrs. Warde in New York last October. Enclosed in the pamphlet is a bookmark with the following quotation by George Bernard Shaw: "Well-printed books are just as scarce as well-written ones, and every author should remember that the most costly books derive their value from the craft of the printer and not from the author's genius."

A charming calligraphic keepsake is *Zooabet*, produced by Dorsey and Joyce Alexander at their Turtle's Quill Scriptorium in Berkeley. Yet another husband-and-wife team, Club members Richard and Shirley Docter, have produced their first book on a handpress: *Early Days in Yosemite Valley*, by Galen Clark.

Calligraphy Contest

CONDORS SKY PRESS and Over-Soul Co. wish to announce that they are offering cash awards for the best examples of original calligraphy.

In the last five years there has been a growing quantity of calligraphic work appearing in the marketplace—bookstores, gift shops, psychedelic stores, Pleasure Faires—and even on the walls of public places and facilities. As publishers of hand lettered materials—books and scrolls—the sponsors wish to encourage unknown and unpublished calligraphers by offering awards and recognition. They hope to repeat this event on an annual basis.

The rules are simple: Any material that is in the calligrapher's original words or material that is in the public domain may be used, with suggested length between 10 and 50 lines. Dimensions may range from post card to poster size. Decorative or illustrative art may be part of the composition.

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Entries from countries outside the U.S.A. and in any language, even newly invented ones, are also solicited.

Contest deadline is March 31, 1968. The first prize is \$100, the second prize \$50; and an additional \$25 prize will be given for the best comments on calligraphy, past, present and personal. Entries should be sent to Over-Soul Co., P.O. Box 1397, Sausalito, California 94965.

Private Press Grants

THE REASON that three out of five of the first Awards to Independent Literary and Art Presses from the National Foundation of the Arts and Humanities went to presses around Iowa City, Iowa, is not hard to find. One recipient, Harry Duncan, proprietor of the Cummmington Press in nearby West Branch, is director of the highly regarded Typography Laboratory on the University of Iowa campus, a post he assumed when its founder, Carroll Coleman, another grant winner, retired to devote his full time to the Prairie Press in Iowa City. The third grantee, Kim Merker, whose publications bear the imprint of the Stonewall and Windhover presses in Iowa City, became interested in printing as a student of Duncan's and now operates a university owned press in the basement of the English-Philosophy building on campus. He is offering a course there on the Hand Printed Book: Problems in Design and Production this year.

The fourth \$10,000 grant was awarded to the Auerhahn Press in San Francisco and a smaller \$5,000 grant went to the Elizabeth Press of New Rochelle, New York. Altogether \$90,000 has been allocated for the program, of which \$70,000 will go to larger presses and \$20,000 to smaller presses.

Duncan is using his grant to take a year's leave to publish five collections of original poetry and short stories. Coleman, too, will concentrate on poetry, publishing four volumes during the year. He has just finished binding the *Gold Rush Journal*, the diary of Zirkle D. Robinson whose party left Virginia, Illinois, in March, 1849, for California and followed two new routes: the Sublette Cutoff and the 40-mile desert crossing to the Carson River. The book is \$5. Members of the Book Club might also be interested in an earlier publication, *Eric Gill; His Social and Artistic Roots*, by Father Edward M. Catich, the artist who designed the lettering for the new Los Angeles art museum. The book, handset in Gill's own typesfaces, is \$5. Merker's poetry volumes will be illustrated with linoleum cuts and multi-color wood engravings.

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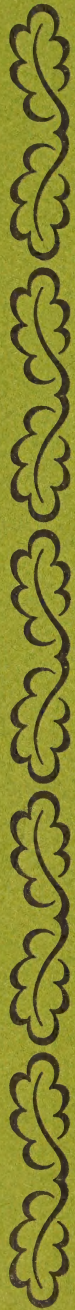
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So he went almost unhonored among poets, and he cared not a damn. But I do."

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